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The Nature of the Reading Process

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ALL discussions of the reading process which have come to the attention of the writer are based more or less upon the assumption that reading is the gathering of thought from the printed page. Books and articles dealing with reading are freighted with such expressions as: seizing impressions, exhaustive reading, building up in one's mind the same experience which the author had when he wrote, a means of getting and of giving to an audience ideas which are expressed in writing, a method of obtaining vicarious experience, a means of preserving and transmitting the ideas of the past to the future, etc. These and many other similar expressions, which are common in educational literature, reveal a concept of language in general and reading in particular which, when brought under the light of reflection, is fantastic, to say the least.

Of course, no one believes that thought has any existence apart from individuals who think. Neither is it in keeping with the dominant note in modern philosophy to hold that thought may be transferred from one individual to another. But granting that thought may not be transferred, is it not possible, by means of words, to produce identical thoughts in the mind of the reader? The answer is, of course, negative. Ideas are the result

of experience, and experience is different for each of us. Since the meanings stimulated by symbols must be generated out of such experience as the individual possesses, there is no possibility of identical meanings as would be the case if thought were gathered and symbols performed the function of a tote road. The nature of reading, therefore, is that of generating thought under the stimulus of printed or written symbols. Symbols serve only to direct the thought processes. The content of the resultant thinking is conditioned by the past experience of the individual and that which comes into being during the process of reading.

We speak of vicarious experience as though one may experience for another and hand him the resulting ideas. Nothing is farther from the truth. One may go to a strange land and under the stimulation of new elements extend his field of meanings. He may then apply such symbols to paper as will enable one who has not experienced these things to generate such meanings as his limited experience will permit. In case it is a new species of animal which is under consideration, the writer can do no more than make comparisons with animals about which the reader has knowledge. He may speak of size, weight, shape of body,

speed, etc. Only to the degree that the reader has experience with animals and ability to use his imagination can he form any concept of that which is being described. But the new experience is not experience with the animal in question. Rather it is the experience of forming a configuration from the elements which he has experienced. One who has not experienced the elements in the described situation cannot so much as do this. One blind from birth may read or hear of the beauty of a sunset. But the task of forming an idea of such would be impossible. The elements brought together under the influence of the stimuli would be those of touch, taste, smell, and hearing. By no means can a sight element be generated from these through the stimulation of symbols only. Impressions are not transmitted; they are generated. To quote John Locke: "Till we ourselves see it with our own eyes and perceive it by our own understandings, we are as much in the dark and as void of knowledge as before. . . ."

Let us assume that an individual who has never seen a mountain reads about mountains. If we are agreed that he has no access to experience other than his own, it will follow that to the degree in which he has experienced the necessary elements can he develop any adequate concept of mountains. If mountains are described to him as huge rock folds and he has some experience with rocks and a concept of folds in other types of material, he may put these two elements together and form as adequate a concept of a mountain as his past experience and intelligence will permit. He has extended his meaning with respect to rocks, but the content of that meaning is drawn entirely from his own mind, that is, his own fund of experience. The concept of mountains could be produced through the imagination though no mountains existed. The reading material merely directs the process of putting elements together. It does not in itself guarantee an objective reality which corresponds to the resulting concept. Ideas generated under the directing stimulus of

symbols would in some instances be generated later by the individual were he not affected by reading. This is true especially with respect to generalizations and inventions. It is perhaps much less true in the case of fiction writing.

Several evil effects result from thinking of reading as the gathering of thought from the printed page. (1) It tends to call attention away from the need of an adequate experience background upon which the symbols may work. The symbols are depended upon to furnish the basic experience from which further experience is to be generated. The child, for example, does not obtain a basic concept of "cat" from the word itself. He must have experience with cats if the symbol "cat" is to operate in producing meaning beyond the recognition of the symbol itself as a form or the representation of a sound, and to serve as an agency in extending his present meanings. He possesses the concept "cat" which the presence of the symbol may invoke in the process of thinking to the degree that he knows how to behave toward cats. This truth justifies the efforts of the educator to expand the child's experience with situations and things. Reading is one with thinking and, hence, the individual is as truly learning to read when playing, working, or observing things around him as when learning to associate symbols with meanings.

(2) The wrong concept of reading tends to cause the reader to overlook the value of symbols as agencies for the stimulus to further reflection, once a given body of material has been read. The test of a great book is that it may be read at intervals throughout the life of an individual, serving at all times as effective stimulus. One frequently hears it said, "I have read this book or this passage many times and every time I find something new in it." This from our standpoint, of course, is wrong. There is nothing in the book but paper and ink. As one obtains new experience or as the immediate mental and physical environment changes, new ideas are developed under the stimulus of the same symbols.

Stating an analogy in terms of the chemical laboratory, new materials have been added to the test tube upon which the catalytic agent (reading symbols) may operate.

(3) In emphasizing the importance of speed of reading it should be noted that speed is an asset only to the extent that it represents a mastery of the mechanics of the process. Thinking in reading does not go on effectively when the stimuli directing the process are not automatically received. Fixations must move forward in a rhythmic manner without halting or regression. Furthermore, the background of experience must be adequate to meet the requirements of reflection. To emphasize speed to the point of neglecting the thinking is both wasteful at the time and conducive to non-scholarly habits of reading. The good reader will at times put the book aside and carry on a train of thought which has been stimulated by the reading process; he may return to the passages previously read for further reflection; or he may read a line many times before going forward.

The thinking aspect of the reading process has generally been neglected in teaching individuals to read. Of course, in the question of speed, much will depend upon the kind of material which is being read. The reading of fiction, for example, is rather in the nature of day-dreaming than of solid thinking. The thought content is usually so light that the mental process of the reader can easily keep pace with the incoming stimulation from the symbols. Hence, in cursory reading the speed of the process is a fair criterion of the quality of reading. This is not true when the material is of a problem-solving nature.

(4) It is frequently assumed that those who read under the stimulus of the same symbols read the same thing. This would be substantially true were reading a process of gathering ideas and were language a highway by means of which ideas are brought to a receiving mind. Since, however, ideas are generated out of the content of past experience, the content of that generated is at least as different as the

apperceptive background of each reader. The writer is thinking and paralleling his thought with symbols; the reader is observing symbols and reflecting upon the basis of his past experience which conditions the content of his thinking. This fact accounts in no small part for the unreliability of teachers' marks. What the teacher scores is his own reflection at the time of reading, assuming that the writer prepared the symbols with the same thought in mind. Should the teacher read the paper at a later date with a somewhat different mind-set, he would likely generate meanings different from those of the first reading. The difficulty is one which should be recognized and some attention given to it. When we evaluate papers, books, articles, etc., we really evaluate what the symbols cause us to generate and not what was generated in the mind of the writer. We are inclined to assume a perfect parallelism, but the very nature of the problem makes the validity of such an assumption impossible. As a practical suggestion, materials to be evaluated should be read at least twice with a time span between each reading.

The above discussion leads to the question of what it means to read or write a fact. While it is not possible for one to read or think beyond his experience, it is possible for one to write beyond his experience. One, for example, may write about the horrors of war who has never experienced the carnage of a battle field. The symbols, when read by one with a background of war experience, may be even more effective when prepared by a clever writer lacking experience with war than when written by a veteran who is clumsy in the use of words. That is, word symbols may cause to be generated more in the mind of the reader than existed in the mind of the writer. It is almost certain that Shakespeare did not experience as much as many of his readers when stimulated by his symbols. For example, many an individual has more experience with which to build a concept of King Lear than did Shakespeare. In the extreme, it is possible for one to write

The Role of the Concept of Reading Ability

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ONE of the most fruitful fields of research in the psychology of reading has been that concerned with the analysis of specific psychological functions involved in reading. The study¹ herein reported was designed to investigate the role played by the concept in reading ability. Taking our cue from the fact that the efficient reader is actually better equipped than the poor reader from the standpoint of vocabulary (which is assumed to be a measure of the individual's verbal concepts, at least), the problem was to make a more specific determination of the nature of this relationship. In other words, we were interested in finding out how the adequacy of a person's concepts reacts upon his ability to read.

The study was carried on principally through the medium of various comparisons between two groups of readers selected from the freshman class at the University of Iowa. One group, hereafter designated as "good readers," was composed of individuals ranking at the 65th percentile or above in paragraph comprehension ability and at the 58th percentile or above in the ability to recognize word meanings, as these functions are measured by Parts I and II, respectively, of the Iowa Silent Reading Test. The second group, hereafter referred to as "poor readers," was made up of individuals ranking at the 36th percentile or below in paragraph comprehension ability and at the 40th percentile or below in the ability to recognize word meanings. In order to be certain that such differences as might be brought to light were not attributable to variations in general intelligence rather than to varia-

tions in reading ability, the groups were also selected in such a way that the average scores of the two groups on the University of Iowa Qualifying Examination were approximately equal at the 50th percentile.

The problem of selecting the specific techniques to be used in analyzing the concepts of these individuals appeared to demand for its solution a fairly exhaustive description of the concept; so the following scheme was set up as the systematic cornerstone of the study. In the first place, attributes of both a generic and a quantitative order appear to characterize the concept. While the nature of generic differences may not be clearly evident upon first glance, such differences as are exemplified in concrete as opposed to abstract concepts seem to be of this order. The varying mental content of concepts might also serve as a basis for a generic classification of concepts. The applicability of quantitative categories is more obvious. From this point of view, each concept possesses a given degree of *richness*, completeness, or fullness; it possesses a definite degree of *organization*; it is characterized by a certain amount of *clarity* in the experience or mind of the individual; and it stands in a given degree of *accuracy* or fidelity to the accepted meaning of the concept. In terms of this scheme, then, the purpose of the investigation was to determine how the concepts of good and poor readers vary, first, generically, and second, quantitatively, the latter category subsuming the attributes of richness, organization, clarity, and accuracy.

A comparison of the concrete as opposed to the abstract concepts of the two groups of readers constituted the initial approach to a study of generic variations.

1. Paul G. Murphy, "The Role of the Concept in Reading Ability." Unpublished Doctor's Dissertation, Department of Psychology, University of Iowa, 1932.

Without going into detail it may be said that such a comparison revealed no real differences. Neither did an introspective analysis of the concepts of the two groups, nor again a comparative study of the types of responses exhibited in a free association test, indicate any striking dissimilarities. It may be that the techniques to which the investigator was forced to resort in this phase of the study were of such a gross nature as to defeat the purpose for which they were used. On the other hand, the preponderance of evidence all pointing in the same direction would seem to lend considerable weight to the conclusion that the concepts of good and poor readers do not differ generically.

Upon the assumption that the richness of a concept is indicated by the frequency and rapidity of the train of associations set up as the concept is brought into the foreground of consciousness, both the continuous and discrete free association techniques were used as means of comparing the two groups in this respect. Wiley² made similar use of the free association test.

Ten words, ten phrases, and ten short paragraphs of medium length were presented visually to the 20 subjects, with the instruction to "respond with a series of words indicating all the things that come into your mind during the 30 seconds following the presentation of each stimulus." The results are summarized in Table I.

TABLE I. AVERAGE NUMBER OF ASSOCIATIONS PER STIMULUS IN CONTINUOUS FREE ASSOCIATION TEST.

	Good Readers (N=10)	Poor Readers (N=10)	P
Words	7.65	7.82	87
Phrases	7.18	6.41	48
Paragraphs	7.87	7.69	90

Assuming that P must be 5 or less for a difference to be significant, it will be noted that no real differences between the two groups of readers are here indicated.

Additional evidence on this point was

2. Will E. Wiley, "Difficult Words and the Beginner," *Journal of Educational Research*, 17, 1928, 278-89.

3. P, in Fisher's formula for computing the significance of differences between the means of small groups, indicates the number of chances in 100 that the obtained difference is due to chance.

afforded by the measurement of reaction times on the discrete free association test utilized in the study of generic differences. For the results of this analysis, see Table II. Both the mean and median times were computed because it was felt that the mean unduly weighted extremely long reaction times which appeared occasionally in the results of both types of readers.

TABLE II. REACTION TIME PER RESPONSE IN DISCRETE FREE ASSOCIATION TEST (100TH'S OF A SECOND)

	Good Readers (N=10)	Poor Readers (N=10)	P
Average Mean Time	237	220	47
Average Median Time	196	188	66

While the poor readers appear to excel in point of rapidity of response, the value of P is so large, whether we consider mean or median times, as practically to preclude the difference being a real one.

A somewhat different approach to this phase of the problem was provided by a study of the scores made by 150 University of Iowa freshmen on certain of the Iowa Placement Examinations. Accepting the training series of these tests as measures of the richness of the individual's informational background or concepts within specific fields of knowledge, the problem was to determine the correlation between the scores on the training examinations and scores on the reading tests in the related aptitude series. This was done in the chemistry and mathematics examinations. Fairly high gross correlations were found between the training tests and the reading sections of the aptitude series (mathematics, .53; chemistry, .47); however, when general intelligence was partialled out the net correlations became insignificant (mathematics, .08; chemistry, .15). This attempt, too, then, secured no evidence of a real relationship between richness of concepts and reading ability.

The fact is recognized that these findings are almost diametrically opposed to the conclusions of the majority of other experimenters in this field. Hilliard⁴ finds

4. G. H. Hilliard, "Probable Types of Difficulties Underlying Low Scores in Comprehension Tests," Iowa Thesis, 1922.

that vocabulary ranks second only to intelligence in its influence upon reading comprehension. Pressey,⁵ upon making various comparisons between a group of good and a group of poor readers, found that the better readers possessed significantly larger (and presumably, richer) vocabularies than did the poor readers. Dewey's extensive study⁶ of the cause of reading comprehension difficulties in history revealed that ignorance of word meanings lies at the basis of many such difficulties. Even more pertinent to the problem at hand is Bird's study,⁷ which concerned itself with the effect of concepts broader than words and word meanings upon comprehension ability. One group of normal school students in educational psychology was asked to read, without preliminary preparation or explanation, a difficult chapter dealing with the nervous system. Another group of the same general ability was requested to read the same material except that this time the assignment was preceded by a careful explanation of the various parts of the chapter and a demonstration of a model of a brain and a preserved human brain. In terms of the present study, the members of the second group attacked the reading material with broader and more adequate concepts than those of the first group. On a subsequent comprehension test designed to test their understanding of the material read, the experimental group made significantly higher scores than did the control group. Condit's study,⁸ which is practically identical with that of Bird, except that it was carried on at a lower age level, failed to show such large differences between the two groups. In every case, however, the difference was in favor of the training or "apperception" group.

The discrepancy between the results of these studies and the conclusion of the

present investigation may be due, however, to the failure on the part of previous experimenters to distinguish clearly between richness, as the term is used here, and other attributes of the concept. So far as the writer knows, the present study is the first attempt to isolate and measure this factor alone. Further experimentation is needed.

While the exact nature of the attribute of organization cannot be so clearly and specifically defined as could the nature of richness, it is assumed that this characteristic of the concept may be identified with the availability of concept meanings for immediate use, or with the proximity of association between the concept-symbol and the meanings which it symbolizes. In the light of this interpretation of the term, the controlled association technique was selected as best adapted to the demands of the investigation, the degree of organization being assumed to vary inversely with the length of the association time.

Three controlled association tests, adapted from the Woodworth-Wells series, were administered to the 20 subjects of the two groups, yielding the results set forth in Table III. Here again the occasional appearance of exceptionally long reaction times made the computation of both mean and median times appear advisable.

TABLE III. RESULTS OF CONTROLLED ASSOCIATION TESTS

Average Median Reaction Time Per Response (100th's of a second.)			
	Good Readers (N=10)	Poor Readers (N=10)	P
Part-whole test	163	192	03
Opposites test	195	223	07
Analogies test	276	313	07
Average Mean Reaction Time Per Response (100th's of a second.)			
Part-whole test	223	249	27
Opposites test	296	381	02
Analogies test	341	380	18

While some of the differences here indicated are not sufficiently large to satisfy the demands of significance, in practically every case, regardless of whether we consider mean or median times, the chances are quite high that the observed difference

5. L. C. Pressey, "Specific Elements Making for Proficiency in Silent Reading When General Intelligence is Held Constant." *School and Society*, 24, 1926, 589-592.

6. J. C. Dewey, "A Case Study of Reading Comprehension Difficulties in American History." Iowa Thesis, 1931.

7. Grace E. Bird, "An Experiment in Focalization." *School and Society*, 8, 1918, 569-70.

8. Margaret Condit, "The Effect of Familiarity of Subject Matter Upon Speed and Comprehension in Silent Reading." Iowa Thesis, 1919.

is a true one. And in every case without exception the results point toward the more efficient organization of the concepts of the good readers.

In a desire to substantiate this finding, if possible, with additional lines of evidence, the completion test included in the 1929 edition of the American Council of Education Psychological Examination was hit upon as an additional measure of what the investigator has chosen to call the organization of concepts. This test, which consists of some 40 definitions, is essentially a measure of the testee's ability to complete each statement with a word indicating the concept which is being defined. Without going into a discussion of the assumptions involved in the utilization of this test as a measure of organization, a highly significant difference between the average scores of the two groups on this test was indicated. This finding provided additional support for the contention that the concepts of good readers are more efficiently organized than those of poor readers.

Kakise⁹ states that "clearness or unclearness of meaning, abstracted from content-feeling or reproduction, may be reduced (introspectively) to mere feelings of certainty or uncertainty." This assertion appeared to provide experimental justification for measuring the quality of clarity in terms of the degree of certainty accompanying the identification of various concepts. Using a standardized word-recognition test as a basic measuring instrument, the test was administered to the 20 subjects with the double instruction, first, to select the correct answer from the five alternative definitions provided for each stimulus word, and second, to indicate on the basis of a three-point scale the degree of certainty accompanying each response. The average degree of certainty accompanying the responses of the two classes of readers is indicated in Table IV.

In so far as the technique here utilized is valid, the concepts of the good readers are shown to possess a significantly higher

degree of clarity than those of the poor readers. Statistically stated, the chances are 99 in 100 that the tendency here revealed is a true one.

TABLE IV. AVERAGE DEGREE OF CERTAINTY ACCOMPANYING RESPONSES IN CLARITY TEST (ON A SCALE OF 3)

Good Readers (N=10)	Poor Readers (N=10)	P
2.60	2.38	.01

In evaluating the relative accuracy of the concepts of the two groups, an accumulation of evidence from several different sources was available. The first set of data was provided by an analysis of the scores made by the 20 subjects on a test modeled after a familiar intelligence test technique, wherein they were requested to point out differences between such closely related concepts as *haste* and *speed*, *idea* and *opinion*, etc. While the difference between the average scores of the two groups on this test was in favor of the good readers, the chances that the difference was a true one were found to be only 76 in 100. The experimenter feels, however, that the failure of the technique to discriminate more clearly between the two types of readers is due largely to the low reliability of the test (.42 by the chance-halves method). An examination of the scores of the two groups on one part of the English Training Test of the Iowa Placement Series, wherein the testee is required to select from three alternative statements that one which most accurately indicates the specific meaning of a given word, revealed a highly significant difference in favor of the better group. An analysis of scores on three different vocabulary tests from the point of view of the percentage of items attempted that were correct also indicated, in every case, a significant superiority on the part of the good readers. The conclusion would seem to be warranted, then, that the concepts of good readers are more accurate than those of poor readers, if my methods are valid. This conclusion is in essential agreement with Thorndike's postulation¹⁰ of wrongness

9. Hikoze Kakise, "Conscious Concomitants of Understanding," *American Journal of Psychology*, 22, 1911, 14-64.

10. E. L. Thorndike, "Reading and Reasoning: A Study of Mistakes in Paragraph Reading," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 8, 1917, 323-32.

Systematic versus Incidental Training in Reading

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WITH an extensive range in time allotment¹ for reading in the program of studies, and with the conclusion that most of the failures in school are due to inability to read,² the questions of how much and what kind of reading instruction present themselves for major consideration. Many experiments have been conducted to discover merits in different plans. Studies of data have emboldened some to hazard the conclusion that reading should not be taught systematically.

Among the arguments advanced to support the contention that reading should be taught through other subjects are: that the development of reading skills cannot be completed in the reading period;³ that the reading class is not a natural reading situation;⁴ that reading skills will reach higher levels in ultimate attainment when developed through other subjects because all teachers will be required to know and practice best general reading techniques;⁵ that greater attainment will be realized in the other subjects studied due to the more adequate reading ability developed for that subject;⁶ and that it will be more economical of time through the elimination of present wasteful duplication.⁷

Against the above arguments are set the following claims in support of a systematic program of reading instruction: that the child cannot read in any content sub-

ject until he has learned to recognize a minimum vocabulary;⁸ that this minimum word knowledge can be most economically accomplished by intensive attention given to general reading skills;⁹ that slowness of acquiring facility in the use of reading skills through an incidental scheme would result in discouragement on the part of the child;⁹ that content subjects would suffer through the spread of effort on the part of the teacher to know and administer reading techniques;¹⁰ and that it is not conceivable that all teachers can be presumed to be adequately trained or interested sufficiently to diagnose scientifically for reading difficulties and apply remedial measures.

Kathryn Krieger¹¹ reports a new type of teaching reading in her second grade in the Montecello school in Baltimore. Her room is pictured as a veritable workshop. "Books, typewriters, saws and hammers, paint pots. Observation; reading, writing; doing. All blended—these are ways of holding interest; setting problems; facing difficulties; establishing skills, learning to learn." Her use of the content subjects as media through which reading is taught even at the second grade level is summarized in her report as follows: "A child soon realizes how valuable reading is if he lives in an atmosphere where reading is indispensable. If the subject matter in history, geography, elementary science,

1. Armentrout found the range of time allotment in the first grades in thirty-three elementary training schools to be eighty-five minutes to six hundred minutes per week.

2. Gates, R. I., *Improvement of Reading*, p. 4.

3. Gray, Olive, "Teaching Pupils to Read Arithmetic and Other Subject Matter," *Elementary School Journal*, Vol. 26, p. 607.

4. Meriam, Junius, "Avoiding Difficulties in Learning to Read," *Educational Method*, 9:413-19, April, 1930.

5. Holmes, Eleanor, quoting Woodring and Fleming, *Teachers College Record*, April 1928, p. 617.

6. McCallister, "Determining the Types of Reading in Studying Content Subjects," *School Review*, 40:115-23.

7. Yoakam, *Reading and Study*, pp. 7-8.

8. Gray, W. S., *Review of Educational Research*, October, 1931, pp. 248-249.

9. Gates, R. I., *op. cit.*, p. 31.

10. *The Twenty-Fourth Year Book* in discussing "Geography and Reading" says, "One reads geography to gain experience, to secure through reading what one would get directly were one to visit the section of the world described in a passage. There are tourists who miss the scenery because they are too busy reading the guide books. Geography may in the same way miss its main purpose if pupils get no experiences from its study but experience in answering questions, selecting main points, outlining, and map study."

11. Krieger, Kathryn, "The Relation of Reading to Other Subjects," *N. E. A. Journal*, June, 1930, pp. 173-174.

hygiene, and spelling are attractively placed before him and if enough simple and attractive story books are available, he soon feels a great dependency upon reading."

Meriam¹² reports an experiment in "Avoiding Difficulties in Learning to Read." He says "The best way to teach reading is not to teach reading, but to provide the occasion—normal in the lives of little children—in which certain reading functions. Let pupils read to learn; incidentally they will learn to read. Initial steps in reading are most effective when they relate to behaviors most active." He would put play into the program of studies. Play and having wholesome fun would be starting points. From the conversation growing out of the play the teacher would write expressions on the board. This forms the first story. "Read as much as contributes to the fun of the game."

Meriam based his conclusions upon a group of pupils (27) who withdrew from the University Elementary School (Missouri) where reading had been initiated as described above. They entered one of the regular schools of Columbia, Missouri. Grades made by these pupils and those made by other pupils in that city showed distinct superiority for the experimental group.

Unfortunately there was no evidence that the groups were scientifically paired for the experiment. We know nothing of the mental ability of the pupils involved, their home environment, attendance records, et cetera. Nothing is said of the type of instruction in the control groups. This may have been the old type which would not be fair, in the inference drawn, to the best procedures used in the newer, approved methods of teaching reading.

During the period 1917 to 1921, Collings conducted in Macdonald County, Missouri, a similar experiment.¹³ The figures show the experimental group consistently superior. Again nothing is said

concerning the pairing of the children of the various groups, nor does he describe the methods used in the control group.

Meriam¹⁴ cites a similar experiment at Lincoln School, Teachers College. It is reported that in the first grade, little time is given to reading at all. In the second grade the children reach the norm for the country. In the third they are slightly superior, while the grades beyond are much superior. Here again the ability of the pupils involved may have been a major factor.

Gates¹⁵ and others report the findings of an experiment conducted with first grade children in the Horace Mann School in 1923 and 1924. In the experiment the groups were scientifically paired, including age, intelligence, previous school experience, home surroundings and training, social, moral, and emotional qualities, physical fitness, and maturity. The "opportunistic" teacher reported that she never insisted that the children learn to read. On nine tests of reading skills the "systematic" group surpassed the "opportunistic" group. Fifteen of the "opportunistic" group failed on the oral reading test. None of the "systematic" group failed on this test. Gates does say "we are, therefore, unwilling to make the statement that our data indicate that one method is better than the other in any ultimate sense."

Lessenger¹⁶ reports a study of Ruch and Horn made in the schools of Radcliff, Iowa, in which he says, "Roughly 40% of our pupils were totally free from errors due to faulty reading and the remaining 60% were practically cured in nine months by skillful training in reading without any additional training on the reading skills in arithmetic proper." Here extra emphasis was given to reading generally. It was presumed that this carried over to better reading of arithmetic problems.

14. Ibid.

15. Gates, Arthur and Others, "A Modern Systematic versus an Opportunistic Method of Teaching," *Teachers College Record*, 27:267-700.

16. Lessenger, W. E., "Reading Difficulties in Arithmetical Computation," *Journal of Educational Research*, 11:287-91.

12. Meriam, Junius, op. cit.

13. Ibid.

Greene¹⁷ made a study of directed drill in the comprehension of verbal problems in arithmetic. Four sections of sixth grade pupils were used. He used ten minutes of specially prepared drill for eight days on selecting the processes necessary to solve a verbal arithmetic problem, in the experimental group. This group made a gain of 6.5%.

Lorena Stretch¹⁸ reported the findings of a study to ascertain the relation of problem solving ability in arithmetic to comprehension in reading. Both high and low sections in the fifth and sixth grades in the Sul Ross Public School, Waco, Texas, were used. Reading, arithmetic, and intelligence tests were used in equating the two groups. Both groups had the same teacher, same text, same course of study, and same time allotment. In the control group the procedure included (1) four minute exercise in fundamentals, each pupil checking his own work; (2) explanations and demonstration by the teacher of new procedures; (3) demonstration and explanation of the new procedures by pupils; (4) exercises in which all pupils practiced these procedures; (5) reviewing of exercises in some previous lesson; and (6) occasional short drills in the fundamentals. The experimental group used a similar method but in addition were given daily "exercises in which students were drilled to tell what was given, what was called for, what was correct solution, and what was probable answer." The results showed distinct gain for the experimental group both in ability to solve problems and to gain in reading comprehension. Miss Stretch writes in explanation of the results, "When students increase in problem solving ability, they also increase in reading comprehension, though the increase in reading comprehension is not equivalent to the increase in problem solving ability. In fact the relationship between the two abilities is not as close after a period of special

training in problem solving as it was at the beginning of the training. This gives evidence that special training produces the most significant results in the field of its direct application."¹⁹

A study was made by Anderson²⁰ to determine the comparative merits of free reading and directed reading. He used 7-A and 8-B pupils of the Lovett School, Chicago. A significant aim of the free reading method was the patterning of the teaching of reading in accordance with the motives, purposes, and procedures of out-of-school life. Choice and amount of material was optional. One conclusion arrived at was "the fact that the difference in reading achievement attained by the two groups is very small." Free reading was found to be more effective than directed reading for improving rate and comprehension. The data show that the directed reading group made greater gains in interpreting sentence meaning than the free reading group. Interest and comprehension was greater on the part of the free reading group.

Gray²¹ testifies that "Classroom experience, however, fully justifies the retention of a daily reading period in an improved program of teaching. Many schools which have endeavored to teach reading more or less incidentally have found a surprisingly large number of remedial cases develop sooner or later." And further, "systematic guidance in reading activities in the content subjects is essential. The most valuable results can be secured only as the instruction given during the reading period is supplemented by continuous guidance in reading activities in the content subjects, the literature period, and the library hour."

Writing of ways and means of reorganizing and improving instruction in reading Gray²² tells of a study made possible by the research committee of the Commonwealth Fund. The study was made in

17. Greene, Harry—"Directed Drill in the Comprehension of Verbal Problems in Arithmetic," *Journal of Educational Research*, 11:33-40.

18. Stretch, Lorena, "The Relation of Problem Solving Ability in Arithmetic to Comprehension in Reading," *George Peabody College Contributions*, No. 87, 1931.

19. Ibid.

20. Anderson, Will Day, "An Experimental Study of Free Reading versus Directed Reading," University of Chicago Thesis, 1930.

21. Gray, W. S., "Reading As a School Subject," *N. E. A. Journal*, Jan. 1931, p. 31.

22. Gray, W. S., "A Study of Ways and Means of Reorganizing and Improving Instruction in Reading," *Journal of Educational Research*, March 1927, p. 174.

the schools of Rock Island, Wilmette, and Thornton, Illinois. In part he writes, "Valuable as the good habits of silent reading are, the major aims to be achieved are enriched experience and wholesome interests acquired through wide reading in each school subject or activity . . . The content of each subject must be studied to determine important units or problems, the study of which requires reading materials."

In reviewing methods of improving reading Gray²³ summarizes as follows: "Studies of methods of improving reading in content subjects are of relatively recent origin. Gatto found that the use of parallel selections was of great value in the seventh grade in improving comprehension and retention in history. Simpson and Stearn found that definite training in answering questions and in evaluating, outlining, and summarizing historical materials improved the ability of fifth, sixth, and seventh grade pupils to read and study effectively. Newlun found that specific training in summarizing in history "if properly developed and used, can improve achievement in history more than ordinary study to prepare for topical or question-answer recitations." Helseth encouraged seventh and eighth grade pupils to ask questions in history as they read and to answer them according to plans worked out independently. As a result they gained remarkably during a school year in ability to locate and introduce problems, in ability to solve problems, and in conscious attention to their own methods and habits of work."

The evidence from the elementary school level shows some challenging data from experiments conducted to discover the effects upon learning to read through other than formal reading periods. In most instances, however, there are offsetting factors not scientifically taken into account. The consensus of opinion based upon observation and other forms of study is quite overwhelming in its assurance that reading must be taught as such,

but supplemented with carefully organized programs of association with the other subjects of the program of studies.

Carter Good²⁴ in a study of extensive and intensive reading in the social studies found that on tests of information, problem solving, outlining and retention, the extensive reading group was superior. On the reproduction test, both groups did equally well. The experiment was conducted at the University of Chicago, included 10 classes ranging in size from 30 to 50 pupils of the University High School and the college, and extended over a period of three quarters. His findings warrant giving attention to the relation of reading to the study of the social sciences.

Gray²⁵ prepared an analysis of the uses of reading in preparing high school assignments. He asked the teachers of the University of Chicago high school to name the various ways in which reading is used in the preparation of lessons. The result was a list of 29 uses of reading. These uses were then sent to 250 high school teachers who were asked to check the five uses of reading most useful in preparing their special subjects. The chart prepared representing these replies shows that there are tremendous differences in the special uses of reading abilities. Gray suggested that the evidence showed that the traditional type of reading teaching was not training adequately in the specific uses.

McCallister²⁶ conducted an experiment in three junior high school classes of seventh and eighth grade pupils. The content subjects used were seventh grade history, eighth grade mathematics, and eighth grade general science. Specific reading of directions and attention to skills appropriate to the subject were applied. The purpose of the study was to determine the types of reading necessary for the best study of content subjects. From the findings he concluded that "In order to guide the reading of pupils purposefully and in-

23. Gray, W. S., "Methods of Improving Reading in Content Subjects," *Review of Educational Research*, Vol. I, Oct. 1931, pp. 255-256.

24. Good, Carter, "Extensive and Intensive Reading in the Social sciences," Ph. D. Thesis, University of Chicago, 1925.

25. Gray, W. S., *Proceedings of the National Education Association*, Vol. LVII, 1919, pp. 580-86.

26. McCallister, op. cit.

telligently, teachers must be familiar with the reading activities required by the courses they teach . . . The techniques of teaching different subjects create needs for different forms and applications of reading. Facility in performing the reading activities required in the study of a subject, such as history, arithmetic, or science, does not necessarily result from the training usually provided in reading classes."

Baker²⁷ conducted a study in the University City High School, in a suburb of Saint Louis, Missouri, in an attempt to determine the reading habits and accomplishments of high school pupils. He writes, "Moreover, there is insufficient proof that general progress in school work is greatly influenced by extensive, miscellaneous, undirected reading."

Gore²⁸ reviewed 42 state and 62 city courses of study to discover what provisions were made for teaching reading in the seventh and eighth grades. Out of 42 state courses he found that 14 listed as an objective of reading in the seventh and eighth grades "application of reading ability in all subjects." In the 62 city courses he found that but 13 listed as an objective in these grades the one just quoted. The Mississippi state course (1926) suggested that there be *no regular* reading recitation in the seventh and eighth grades. In the state courses, 13 listed "teach reading in all subjects," under methods and 48 of the city courses listed "train pupils to read for specific purposes" under methods.

Eleanor Holmes,²⁹ in a study of reading in the history of English literature and science at the college level, found that the data show reading at that level and in those two subjects, in most respects, is most effective when directed with specific questions.

In his summaries of reading investigations Gray³⁰ reports the study of Flem-

27. Baker, J. E., "An Analytical Study of the Reading Habits and Accomplishments of High School Pupils," Thesis, University of Chicago, 1926, p. 74.

28. Gore, J. H., "Provisions for Teaching Reading in Courses of Study for Seventh and Eighth Grades," Thesis, University of Chicago, 1928, pp. 9, 11, 16, and 24.

29. Holmes, Eleanor, "Relative Merits of Reading Guided by Specific Questions vs. Careful Reading and Re-reading," Thesis, University of Chicago, 1929, pp. 115-118.

ming and Woodring which outlines the problems involved in directing the study of high school pupils and which summarizes the results of numerous investigations in the field of study. Conclusions are based upon statements of 230 teachers in junior and senior high schools. "The problems emphasized in the report which are of greatest immediate importance relate to inability on the part of pupils to read successfully, to outline skillfully, and to follow directions successfully."

Gray's³¹ summaries also include a report of a study made in Detroit by Corrigan and Kennedy covering a period of one year. Pupils of the seventh and eighth grades were used. One hundred minutes were devoted each week to reading in one group. In another group "no instruction in silent reading is given in the intermediate schools except that which is given incidentally in all subjects." The results of the Parker-Detroit Silent Reading tests showed that the amount of growth in silent reading ability was approximately the same in both types of schools.

In answer to a question on what can be done to improve the reading of high school students who do not carry successfully high school subjects because of failure to read, Gray³² writes that studies to date show that about one-third of the pupils in seventh grade classes rank below the sixth grade norm. He classifies the deficiencies in three groups: (1) those who have attained the sixth grade norm but rank below the median of their class; (2) pupils who are able to read very simple material fluently and with reasonable comprehension, but whose reading achievement is equivalent to that of fifth or early sixth grade pupils; (3) and those who rank unusually low on reading tests.

He prescribes different remedies for each group. The inference is that most high school pupils can carry successfully the courses of that level *if their reading abilities are adequately developed.*

30. Gray, W. S., "Summary of Reading Investigations," *Elementary School Journal*, March, 1929, p. 503.

31. *Ibid.*, March, 1928, p. 496.

32. Gray, W. S., "Reading Deficiencies in Secondary Schools," *The Journal of the N. E. A.*, June, 1931, pp. 197-98.

Remedial Treatment in Reading

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A SURPRISINGLY large number of cases referred to child guidance clinics are children who have trouble in learning to read. Reading disabilities usually result in educational failure and maladjustment. Continued failure in what one is attempting is disastrous to the development of effective work habits both in children and adults. Children often react to their school difficulties by resistance and unruly behavior, by withdrawal and inattention, by compensatory bullying or by discouraged, apathetic attitudes. Any of these reactions may later make for unhappy and ineffective adults. A thorough study of the causes and remedies of reading disabilities is, therefore, an important requisite in successful psychological and educational diagnosis. Fortunately, many types of reading disability respond readily to appropriate remedial measures. Remedial reading becomes, in the clinic, a therapeutic technique in relieving not only the educational maladjustment but freeing the child from many unhappy and undesirable attitudes which warp his developing personality.

The causes of reading disabilities may be classified roughly into those which deal primarily with perceptual and motor difficulties inherent within the child, and those which deal primarily with training or environmental factors. The group of training factors has received more attention of late years than the group of constitutional factors. The modern teacher is usually aware of the importance of effective methods of teaching, motivation and guidance, even though she may not always be able to perform perfectly these difficult skills. Teachers are less often aware of the various constitutional deviations which may

prevent some of their pupils from learning easily by the methods adapted to the majority. Sometimes a child who has a real perceptual difficulty in learning to read is considered disinterested or careless. Remedial measures are often misdirected toward winning interest and increasing motivation in instances when specific help in the field of difficulty would be far more effective. The success obtained by the child when a learning method suitable to his needs is discovered, is often the most potent motivation that can be found for school progress.

The first group of perceptual difficulties in learning are those which are found in the visual field. Reading involves visual stimulation. A child who is handicapped by poor eye-sight quite obviously may have trouble in learning to read until fitted with appropriate lenses. Reading requires visual discrimination not only of simple forms like letters, but of complex patterns such as words. Many poor readers are perfectly able to discriminate the simple forms but fail to discriminate the complex patterns or the sequence of patterns. They tend to divide the larger unit into its simple components by spelling out the individual letters of the word. Other reading-disability cases can discriminate word-patterns readily enough except for their orientation. Such children will recognize the word "was," for example, but will confuse it with "saw." Reversible letters are particularly difficult, such as *b, d, p, q, u, n, m, w, f, t*. The sequence of forms in a pattern is confusing to such children and their reading errors often show transpositions as *split* for *spilt*, *scared* for *sacred*, etc. Children who have difficulties in visual perception rarely learn to read easily by the sight methods

which begin with words and phrases as units. If such a child has good intelligence, and many such children earn high ratings on intelligence tests, he may find it easier to memorize the page than to try to make an analysis of the confusing patterns thereon. Or, if the child does learn to read, he does so slowly, haltingly, with many regressive eye movements as he fixates or spells out the letters of words. Frequently he fingers the words, pointing along the lines of the text to see which direction to read.

Difficulties in visual perception may often disrupt the meaning of the text, and are reflected in absurd responses to silent reading projects. One high school boy who had learned to read well enough to make fifth or sixth grade scores on standard reading tests, in spite of his reversal tendencies, was considered "psychopathic" by his teacher. She showed a test paper in history to support her view. In the midst of the history paper the boy had inserted a paragraph on singing, a totally unrelated subject so far as the teacher could make out. An analysis revealed, however, that the boy had tried to answer the question, "Discuss signing the Declaration of Independence," which he read as "Discuss singing . . .," a perfectly understandable error in the light of his difficulty in word perception. Another child, a third-grade boy, who frequently reversed words in reading and spelling, wrote the following example in arithmetic: $4 \times 6 = 87$. When the child was asked to explain how he got this surprising answer he replied, "Well, I didn't know all my tables, so I had to add it up. I remembered that three sixes are eighteen so I wrote down eighteen (writing 81) and put another six under the one, and the answer is 87." This boy's arithmetic as well as his reading was greatly confused by his reversal tendency.

Successful remedial measures often are simple, common sense procedures suggested by the analysis of the difficulty and by observation of the child's errors as he attempts to read. If the child has difficulty with complex patterns, it seems only

sensible to allow him to learn to read by a method which begins with the small units. We can observe such children trying spontaneously to help themselves by spelling out words. Since spelling is a laborious method, we would probably better replace the spelling with a sounding or phonetic method, which also begins with the small units but allows more rapid synthesis. If the child has difficulty in recognizing the direction of the pattern, we might wisely watch him and see how he attacks the problem. We frequently observe such children fingering the words and pointing along the text in an effort to get a motor cue to direction. By using a manual method of tracing words while articulating them slowly, the child may be able to learn to discriminate direction and sequence. We have frequently observed that such children tend to be left handed in some traits, ambidextrous, or confused in hand and eye preference. It is possible that the lack of consistent directional responses occasioned by the confusion in handedness is responsible for the child's failure in space perception. Remedial instruction in reading should utilize so far as possible the leads presented by the child. The methods selected should be harmonious with the child's native tendencies. The children may often teach us much about appropriate methodology for their difficulties, if we are alert to observe and do not presume to condemn their efforts at learning simply because their methods do not correspond with the standard methods. Often their spontaneous attempts are rational ones when analyzed in the light of their perceptual difficulties.

A second, and very frequent, group of perceptual difficulties are those which deal with auditory discriminations. Difficulties in auditory perception are frequently overlooked in an analysis of reading disabilities, and yet are often more important even than difficulties in visual perception. It is an obvious statement that we read with our eyes. As a matter of fact we read with much more than our eyes. The visual stimulus, the word as printed, is present, is relatively permanent and can

be manipulated. We can look more closely if we are not secure in visual perception, or we can trace the word manually to be sure of its pattern. The printed word, however, serves merely to call up the meaning. The meaning may be thought of in many ways. Usually the child associates the printed word with the word as heard or spoken as a means of obtaining its meaning. This auditory memory thus aroused, is fleeting, temporal, and more difficult of analysis than is the relatively static visual stimulus. If the child has difficulty in auditory discrimination he may confuse words which sound nearly alike, such as, *beg*, *bag*, *cashing*, *catching* etc. The lack of clear cut auditory discrimination may disrupt both the mechanics and comprehension of reading. Teachers may readily find many examples of this difficulty among the errors made by their poor readers. One child after reading the word *beg*, said, "Oh yes, it's like a beg of potatoès." Another child defined *muzzle* as *muscle*. There are, of course, many humorous instances involving failure in precise auditory discrimination, such as the child who said that the Plymouth Rock was *hysterical*, meaning *historical*. Amos and Andy are classic examples of this type of confusion. Andy, in using the word *regusted*, has a notion of its meaning but his auditory memory lacks the precision necessary for accurate recall. Children who have difficulty in auditory discrimination are often monotones in singing, and may have a history of prolonged baby talk, delayed speech, or speech defect.

The remedial method found helpful in such cases is one which emphasizes the motor component of speech to supplement the auditory component. Children having such difficulties may learn to differentiate the confusing consonants and vowels by learning the positions of the speech organs for each sound. Drills such as those used in speech correction are helpful. Oral reading also intensifies the sounds of words and makes them more vivid. A period of daily oral reading with emphasis upon correct pronunciation is

often helpful for children who have difficulties in auditory discrimination. Phonetic drills are also useful devices in stimulating more precise discrimination. Children given such oral and phonetic drills show marked improvement in silent reading and comprehension because of the greater accuracy developed by correcting their errors in the mechanics of word-recognition.

A third group of causative factors in reading disabilities are the difficulties of children who have poor motor control. A number of children are unable to follow a line of print with the eyes or even with the finger. They often skip from the line above to the line below, seemingly unable to coordinate their movements precisely enough to make the delicate motor adjustments involved in reading. Such children are usually inattentive and distractible. The act of attention itself necessitates the inhibition of movements as well as the direction of response to the selected stimuli. A child who has difficulty in control of movement usually has difficulty in inhibition of movement. Sometimes the reading disabilities of such children may be overcome by using charts printed in large type with extra wide spaces between the lines. The motor adjustment is thereby simplified for the child. Allowing the child to draw a line with a pencil or crayon under the words as he reads them is also helpful. The manual movements assist the eye movements and aid the development of better precision. The combination of manual and ocular movement directed toward the printed words also assists in maintaining the attentional adjustment to reading. The poor motor control is a general factor affecting not only reading but writing and all motor activities. It is interesting to note that clinical records show an unusually large number of cases of enuresis among reading disability cases having this type of poor motor coordination.

These three types of difficulties, visual, auditory and motor are frequently encountered in the case studies of reading disabilities. These are just a few of many of

The Wayside, Home of Three Authors

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Two summers ago, the editor visited The Wayside in Concord, which is open daily to the public for a very small fee. He found it not only rich in literary associations but an unusually charming example of a New England home. Perhaps no literary landmark in America holds more interest to those concerned with children's literature, for three authors of books for boys and girls have lived at The Wayside.

The editor feels fortunate in being able to offer to readers of THE REVIEW the following reminiscences of the house, written by the present owner, Miss Margaret Lothrop.

IF ONLY Polly Pepper, Louisa Alcott, and all of the other children, real and imaginary, who have lived in The Wayside, could talk with us, what questions we would ask! Yes, THE FIVE LITTLE PEPPERS, and the Alcott girls, the originals of LITTLE WOMEN, all lived in The Wayside, in Concord, Massachusetts, although the Peppers were alive only in the mind of their author, "Margaret Sidney," Mrs. Daniel Lothrop, while Louisa Alcott and her sisters were actual children. Yet, the Peppers were as real to me, a child living in The Wayside, as Louisa and her sisters, although I knew that these girls had played PILGRIM'S PROGRESS on the same stairs upon which I played.

Polly, Phronsie, Joel and the others came to visit me in books, and the reception of a new volume of THE FIVE LITTLE PEPPERS was quite a ceremony. When the box arrived, the top was taken off, Mother took out a book, looked at various pages, even reading a paragraph here and there, and wrote my name in the book. Then began for me a delightful time when I caught up with all that had been happening to my friends, the Peppers. They served me as brothers and sisters. I

have never known which I liked best, brown-haired Polly or blue-eyed Phronsie with the golden curls, sturdy Ben, jolly brown-eyed Joel or fair-haired serious Davey. They have always been clearly depicted in my mind, quite as clearly as are my friends. To Mother they were even more real, I am sure. She would say, when questioned, that she never made them do anything, but that they came to her and told her what they had been doing, and that she just wrote it down. Often in the twilight, when she sat in her favorite old brown rocking chair, quietly gazing at the fire, with a contented expression crossing and recrossing her face, I used to ask her whether she wanted a book and a light. Almost invariably she would shake her head, and say, with a smile, that she was "thinking of the Peppers." I could almost see them clustered around her chair.

However, THE FIVE LITTLE PEPPERS were not the only books which Mother wrote in The Wayside. The early history of Concord, and especially of The Wayside, fascinated her. The house had seen exciting days when a neighbor, Dr. Samuel Prescott, early in the morning of the nineteenth of April, 1775, had brought the message of Paul Revere after the latter and his companion, Dawes, had been captured halfway between Lexington and Concord. Later in the day, the British marched past, the grenadiers passing in front, and the infantry on the hill behind. Hawthorne had been told by Thoreau that in revolutionary days an owner of the house had believed that he should never die, and this tradition, as well as the events of April 19th, Hawthorne utilized when he was writing of Septimius Felton and his search for the

elixir of life. Both Septimius and Aunt Keziah he placed at The Wayside. This house, then, was a fit scene for further tales of those stirring times. In *THE LITTLE MAID OF CONCORD TOWN*, Mother combined characters from the history of the town with imaginary characters of her own. In her story, Debby Parlin lived in the little cottage next door, and Aunt Keziah once again peered from the windows of The Wayside. All of the historic events mentioned are accurately described, for Mother buried herself in histories. She seemed to live again in that period, found it fascinating, and made it vital to me, a girl. The old wide floor boards, hand-hewn beams, low ceilings and central chimney are still in The Wayside, visible evidence of the still earlier frontier days of 1725.

Louisa Alcott has written in her journal about much that happened while they lived in the house, and has said that some of her happiest years were spent at Hillside, as the Alcotts called it when they lived there from 1845 to 1848. It seemed good to them to have a home of their own once again after the hard days of Fruitlands. Louisa was twelve when they bought the house, and she lived there until about her sixteenth birthday. I like to think of her as she was at thirteen, according to the description of a neighbor, Miss Clara Gowing: tall and slim, the fleetest runner in school, full of energy, perseverance and fun, with a keen sense of the ludicrous, apt speech and ready wit. She loved to run on the hillside back of the house, and speaks in her journal of doing so. In The Wayside barn the girls gave their plays, Jack the Giant Killer and other fairy tales, to the delight of themselves and of young neighbors, including the Emerson children. It is impossible to say that The Wayside was the scene of *LITTLE WOMEN*, although Louisa did live in the house when she was fifteen, her age at the beginning of the book, for, although in writing the book she utilized and adapted many actual events, she changed the scene to a later period. She chose the time of the Civil

War, yet at that time she was entering her thirties. She changed the ages of her younger sisters, in the book making Beth the third girl and only two years younger than herself, Jo, when, in reality, Beth was the youngest and was seven years the junior of Louisa. She made changes also in the description of the house and its surroundings, utilizing her experiences in Boston as well as those in Concord. However, she did live in The Wayside when she was fifteen, and many of the experiences of the Alcott family during those years were incorporated in the book.

They had hard times while they lived in The Wayside, but Mr. Alcott was optimistic and Mrs. Alcott courageous. One instance may suffice. Late one winter Saturday afternoon, when Louisa was about fourteen, it was discovered that there was just enough wood to last until more could be secured. At that moment a poor child came to borrow wood. Her baby brother was sick, and their father, having taken all of his wages, had gone on a spree. Without demur the Alcotts gave, Mr. Alcott maintaining that Providence would take care of them. Late that night the farmer who usually provided them with wood, drove up and asked if he might put his load of wood in their yard, as he could not continue to Boston that night in the storm. He added that, if Mr. Alcott would like to keep the wood, he might pay at his convenience.

The Alcotts sold the house in 1852 to Nathaniel Hawthorne, who, as has been said, changed the name from Hillside to The Wayside. As he wrote in a letter to Mr. Duyckinck, "I have rebaptized it 'The Wayside'—which seems to me to possess a moral as well as descriptive propriety. It might well have been called 'Woodside'—the hill being covered with a growth of birch, locust-trees, and various sorts of pines." When Mr. and Mrs. Hawthorne moved there, in 1852, their children were quite young. Una was eight, Julian six, and Rose, or Rosebud as her mother called her, was only a year old, and learned to walk in the house. She it was, who, many years later, after the

death of her husband and little boy, joined the Roman Catholic Church, founding a hospital and special sisterhood for the free care of incurable cancer patients. Such work, however, was far from the thoughts of any of them when they arrived, one hot summer afternoon, at the first and only home Mr. Hawthorne ever owned. Great was his joy in the purchase of what was then an old house, and he wrote to his friend, "for the first time in my life I feel at home."

Although Mr. Hawthorne wrote primarily for adults, still he loved children, and for his own wrote *THE WONDER BOOK* and *TANGLEWOOD TALES*. I like to picture him reading aloud to them with his deep voice, kindling their imaginations with his own. He loved to read to them, and they loved to listen. When they were older, after their return, in 1860, from England, he read aloud all of Sir Walter Scott's novels. Julian has written that he and his sisters would forego any other form of entertainment in order to hear their father read aloud. Mr. Hawthorne's relations with his children were quite ideal. Una told Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson that her father was the best playmate any one could ask for. He not only read aloud to the children, but he also told them stories. *TANGLEWOOD TALES* was written for them early in 1853 at The Wayside, the introduction even being named "The Wayside." In it Hawthorne speaks of the hillside, of the quaint rustic summer house built by Mr. Alcott, and of "the southeastern room (now the dining room) where the sunshine comes in, warmly and brightly, through the better half of a winter's day." Hawthorne's dining table still stands in that room, a reminder of the simple fare and happy family life it has seen.

Perhaps more intimately connected with the inner life of the great romancer is his study, the tower which he built, with other additions to the house, upon his return from England and Italy. At Montaùto, near Florence, the Hawthornes rented a semi-ruined castle with a tower which delighted Mr. Hawthorne. It be-

came the prototype of Monte Beni in the *Marble Faun*, and, later, was the inspiration for The Wayside tower, or his "Sky Parlor." With its gabled windows it rises above the house and provides distant vistas of the meadows Mr. Hawthorne loved so well. The house has had additions extending over many years, and there are steps up and down on the second floor, connecting the different floor levels. When the Alcotts arrived, the square old colonial house had four rooms and a lean-to kitchen. This was not sufficient for the family, so Mr. Alcott, who loved to make changes, cut in two an old wheelwright's shop, which had been on the place for many years. Half of this he attached to the western end of the house, and the other part to the eastern end. In the western part Louisa was given the first room that she ever had for her own, the one she so happily described in her journal. The eastern end is now our kitchen, and when Mr. Hawthorne occupied the house, he used the western end of the old shop for his study before he built the tower. Above the western room Mr. Hawthorne built a new room for his elder daughter Una. He added two other rooms, a parlor for Mrs. Hawthorne, and above it his guest room, or "spare chamber" of that day. All of these rooms still have, over the doors and windows, the gables which he seemed to love, and most of the rooms have the wood "graining" so popular at that time. Few structural changes have been made since the Hawthornes left. The house is still painted a dark buff. The trees and hedge are taller, but in many ways it is still as Mr. Hawthorne left it when he started with his friend, Franklin Pierce, on that last journey to the White Mountains.

In the introduction to *TANGLEWOOD TALES*, Mr. Hawthorne said that his friend Eustace Bright brought to him the stories, and that in the study they read them over. Mr. Hawthorne did find the stories in the study and on the hillside as he paced back and forth on his "Mount of Vision," but they came to him not from outside, but from his own imagina-

Research in Elementary Language*

A Report on Problems and Progress

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(Continued from March)

Section III. *The Content and Placement of the Curriculum*

A. *Curriculum Content*

The determination of the content of the language curriculum is quite largely affected by the nature of the acceptable philosophy of the subject. In general the point of view that language instruction should attempt to habituate in the child those language skills and situations which he is most likely to use and meet in life appears to be a sound philosophy. But it leads to embarrassment. This social utility point of view holds generally that an analysis of social usages and activities gives the best picture of the emphasis and the content of the curriculum. It has been pointed out, however, that elementary school language is a field which does not lend itself readily to this method of study. Language is a field over which adults generally have insufficient control. A curriculum based on such a procedure is bound to be inadequate. It becomes apparent, therefore, that new techniques must be developed for determining the language curriculum. It is equally apparent also that adequate criteria of practice and accuracy must be set up. These two things research workers in the language field are attempting to do as part of a program of curriculum development which will place the emphasis on the constructive rather than on the error aspects of language.

B. *Grade Placement*

The placement of the basic instructional units for effective learning assumes the existence of valid subject matter items in the first place. The proper grade placement of these units depends upon several factors, prominent among which are: (1)

the immediate social importance of the items, (2) the ultimate social significance of the items, and (3) the difficulty of the material itself. The first of these considerations concerns itself with the attempts of the learner himself to make use of the skills involved. The second deals with the ultimate adult utility of the skills. The third is a psychological consideration involving such factors as the real or innate difficulty of the unit resulting from the nature of its content or its organization.

C. *Types of Studies on the Curriculum*

Possibly the best conception of the nature and extent of the local research program may be gained through a presentation of a series of brief reports of completed studies and of problems now under way in each of these fields of research. The following studies, some of which are completed and some of which are merely in progress, are classified roughly in accordance with the field in which they belong and the contribution which they make.

1. *Analyses of Textbook Content*

- a. Crawford, J. R., *The Drill Content of Certain Practice Exercises in Language*. Master's thesis, 1929.⁶

This study involved the analysis of eighteen different types of supplementary drill exercises in language. The main purpose of the study was the determination of the extent to which such drills furnished materials which really contribute to development of the correct choice of words, and the correct usage of verbs, pronouns, and modifiers in the school experience of the child. The tabulations showed the actual word-forms drilled upon and the number of times each appeared. A startling lack of uniformity in word-forms presented

*Presented before the meeting of The National Conference on Research in Elementary School English, Minneapolis, February 27, 1933.

⁶ All of the studies catalogued in this report are investigations now under way or completed under the direction of the writer on the campus of the University of Iowa.

for drill, and a lack of uniformity in devices by which the drills are presented, was found. Only 14.4 per cent of the word-forms appearing in the drills were used by as many as one-half of the authors.

- b. Hamer, Anna M., *The Study of the Overlap in Language Skills in Six Elementary Language Texts*. Master's thesis, 1929.

The purposes of this study were to discover the specific language skills which are being emphasized in grades three and four and to determine the importance of these skills as shown by an analysis of recent textbook material.

- c. Lien, Jacob A. O., *The Grade Location and Drill Frequency of Certain Adjective Modifiers in Selected Language Texts*. Master's thesis, 1932.

This investigation had as its main purpose the determination of the amount of drill on adjectives, the number of different adjectives receiving emphasis, the grade placement, the presence of remedial maintenance drill, and the social importance of the adjective included for study in the six elementary language textbooks analyzed.

- d. Tanruther, E. M., *An Inventory of Instructional Devices for Stimulating Written Language Production*. Master's thesis, 1929.

This study, which is based upon an analysis of six sets of modern textbooks, attempts to bring together a list of devices which are suggested for use by the teacher in the development of the essential written language skills.

- c. Van Brussell, Martha, *The Grade Location of Frequency of Verb Usage Drill in Certain Language Texts*. Master's thesis, 1930.

This study, which is based upon an analysis of six of the newer language texts, attempts to answer the following questions: (1) Is there any consistent program for the grade placement of teaching verbs according to social usage, cruciality, difficulty and universality? (2) Are there any particular verbs which receive special emphasis, and if so, how much drill is provided for each? (3) Is a maintenance program provided to insure permanent mastery?

2. Analysis of Written Compositions

- a. Bailey, C. H., *Verb Forms and Verb Errors in Pupils' Themes in Grades 4, 5, 6*. Master's thesis, 1932.

The main problem of this investigation was to find the verbs which were actually used, their frequency of usage in relation to the total number of running words, the number

and the many kinds of errors and percentages of errors in relation to the opportunity for error in written compositions of 1150 pupils in grades four, five, and six. The tables of error frequencies and error quotients for the verb forms in this study afford an extremely useful source of drill materials.

- b. *Benzler, Evelyn, *Use of Certain Language Skills by High and Low I. Q. Groups of Fourth and Fifth Grade Pupils*. Master's thesis (project under way but not completed).⁷

This is one of a series of studies based on the analysis of written compositions prepared by students whose intelligence ratings are known. The studies by Cesander, Cockrill, and the Hamiltons were based on compositions written by the normal I. Q. group. The purpose of this study is to point out differences between high and low I. Q. pupils in grades four and five in mastery over certain punctuation skills. The comparisons will be made on such items as the occasions for using punctuation error quotients for the various usages, the types of skills used most often both correctly and incorrectly, the types of errors most often made and the relative frequency of occurrence of these errors. Errors of incorrect usage, omissions, and substitutions will be checked. The criterion to be used for this investigation is the "Criterion for the Course of Study in the Mechanics of Written Composition" which is discussed in Section I-B of this report.

- c. Holtman, Nell G., *Pupil Usage of Pronouns in Written Compositions as Related to Textbook Drill*. Master's thesis, 1932.

The primary problem of this study was to make a comparison of pronoun usage in written compositions as related to textbook drill and to determine which types of pronoun errors are most prevalent in the writings of children in grades four, six, and eight. This investigation should be useful to curriculum builders and textbook authors in determining whether or not they are providing the material which meets the life needs of the child in the use of this particular part of speech.

- d. *Vanderstoep, R. F., *Control of the Mechanics of Written Composition by High and Low I. Q. Pupils in the Sixth Grade*. Master's thesis (project under way but not completed).

This study parallels in all major respects the proposed investigation by Miss Benzler with the exception that it will be confined to the sixth grade group.

⁷ Hereafter the titles of all projects under way but not completed are indicated by the asterisk.

3. Analysis of Oral Language Activities

- a. Goldsmith, Anna Marie, *Analysis of Modifiers in the Oral Language Usage of Certain Primary School Children*. Master's thesis, 1932.

This study made use of data collected by means of the Iowa Oral Language Recording Apparatus in the primary, first, second, and third grades of the University Elementary School. The problem itself involved the analysis of modifiers used in the oral language activities of pupils in these grades in the process of accumulating approximately 50,000 running words of oral production.

- b. Laughlin, Frances A., *Verb Usage in the Oral Language of a Group of Primary Grade Children*. Master's thesis, 1932.

The purpose of this study was to classify the actual verbs and verb phrases found in the recording of 50,000 running words of the oral language material used in Miss Goldsmith's study.

- c. Nixon, Anna, *Sentence Structure in the Oral Language of Certain Primary Grade Pupils*. Master's thesis, 1932.

This study is one of the series of three investigations based upon electrical recording of language productions in the junior primary, first, second and third grades of the University School. The data involved approximately 50,000 running words of oral language recording. The study was planned to afford answers to the following questions: (1) What skill in sentence structure may be expected of children in the primary grades? (2) What types of sentences as to meaning and form do children in these grades use most frequently? (3) Do children in these grades use a variety of sentence arrangements? (4) If so, what are the outstanding types?

4. Relation of Oral and Written Language Activities

- a. Gregerson, Alfred J., *The Relative Oral and Written Language Abilities of Certain School Children*. Master's thesis, 1931.

This investigation had for its chief purpose a comparison of the relative quality of the written and oral compositions of school children. It was also a by-product of the investigation by Dr. Betts. The study considered language ability from the standpoint of general merit of the product. It attempted to answer four specific questions: (1) When measured by a written composition scale does the general merit of the oral composition surpass that of the written composition in grades four, five, and six? (2) Is there a significant difference

between the general merit of oral and written compositions in a given grade? (3) Is there pronounced improvement in either oral or written composition ability in grades four, five, and six? (4) What degree of relationship, if any, exists between oral and written abilities in these grades?

- b. Jakeman, F. W., *A Comparison of the Oral and Written Vocabularies of Certain Elementary School Children*. Master's thesis, 1932.

This study was designed to reveal the extent of the difference in types of vocabulary and the frequencies of individual words used in oral and written compositions by identical pupils writing on the same topics in both forms of composition.

- c. Smith, Linda C., *A Comparison of Oral and Written Usages of Verbs and Verbals by School Children*. Master's thesis, 1931.

The problem of this study was the comparison of the use of verb and verbals in a sampling of compositions produced by individual students in both oral and written form. The study was a by-product of Dr. Betts' evaluation of the electric recording apparatus. The data were obtained from pupils in grades four, five, and six of the University Elementary School.

- d. *White, Carl, *Semantic Variations in Oral and Written Vocabulary on Identical Subject Matter*. Master's thesis (project under way but not completed).

One of the significant problems in language which has come to be recognized in recent years is that of the semantic variations in words. Numerous investigations have demonstrated the fact that much of our difficulty in the mastery of vocabulary goes back to the fact that certain of our words in more or less common usage have numerous meanings. It is proposed that this investigation shall make an analysis of semantic variations in the vocabulary of students expressing themselves on the same content in both oral and written form. Such a study will not only reveal the extent of the variations in meaning which exist but will also reveal differences in the characteristics of these variations in oral and written productions. The data for this investigation are the oral and written compositions secured by Dr. Betts in his evaluation of the Iowa Oral Language Recording Apparatus.

5. Miscellaneous Studies on the Course of Study

- a. *Alexander, Margaret P., *A Sixth Grade Course of Study in English Expression*. Master's

thesis (project under way but not completed).

This project involves the practical development and experimental evaluation of a course of study in English expression for the sixth grade. The major purposes underlying this plan are (1) to interlock the language skills developed prior to the sixth year with those to be added during this unit, and (2) to make a study of the teaching units which should be used to develop and maintain control over the specific skills, knowledges, and attitudes selected for sixth grade mastery. The study will make necessary an analysis of the skills taught previous to the sixth grade, and the determination of what new skills are to be developed as well as the optimum form of the teaching units to be stressed. It will require the setting up of standards of accomplishment, suggestions of materials to be used for maintenance purposes, and plans for the measurement of individual accomplishment to aid in diagnostic and remedial work.

- b. Bruce, Jeanette, *A Study of the Use of the Hyphen in Certain Compound Words*. Master's thesis, 1930.

This investigation involved the study of a phase of spelling and punctuation, the use of the hyphen. The study of the hyphen necessarily involves the compound word. In this attempt to determine the question of pupil control over the hyphen, specially designed tests were given to approximately 800 pupils in grades five to nine in a number of different city school systems.

- c. *Bontrager, O. R., *A Psychological Analysis of Certain Punctuation Situations and an Appraisal of Pupil Control*. (Proposed Doctor's dissertation now under way.)

The purpose of this investigation is in a sense twofold. The first phase of the problem involves a psychological analysis of the specific punctuation usages which have been set up in the criterion of correct usage based upon the analysis of style manuals. As a result of this analysis of style manuals certain significant punctuation situations are identified. It is proposed in this investigation to analyze the situations on which there is agreement in four or more of the manuals.

Such a psychological analysis involves the establishment of all of the variations of each specific situation which can possibly be encountered. For example, one of the significant common rules indicates that a comma should be used to set off a substantive in direct address. The following sentences each illustrate this rule:

"For once, Tom, you are correct."

"Tom, for once you are correct."

"For once you are correct, Tom."

From this illustration it will be noted that the word *Tom* which is used in direct address appears once at the beginning of the sentence, once in the middle, and once at the end. Two of the illustrations require the use of one comma, while the other requires the use of two. Here, then, are three variations of one rule which together with other similar variations made up the total situation. It is obvious that all such variations must be taken into account in making an appraisal of pupil mastery of any of these varying types of situations. Following the analysis of each of the situations on a similar basis, it is then proposed to set up a series of test exercises utilizing several different testing techniques for the purpose of obtaining a measure of pupil control over these punctuation practices.

Specifically this investigation will attempt to answer the following questions:

- (1) What items of punctuation as defined in the criterion of correct usage do pupils control?
- (2) What variations will a psychological analysis reveal for each of the punctuation situations?

The attempt to answer these two specific questions will, of course, involve the indirect answers to many secondary problems.

- d. *Goltry, Thomas Keith, *A Mechanical Analysis of Oral Compositions*. (Doctor's dissertation projected for completion in June, 1933.)

This study will involve a very extensive and detailed analysis of a comprehensive sampling of the oral language productions of a small number of pupils in grades four, five, and six. A system of coding which has been developed will permit the use of the Hollerith mechanical sorting and tabulating equipment. This type of analysis is almost certain to bring to light many relationships which hitherto have not been identified. A more complete discussion of this problem is presented in Section I-A of this report.

- e. *Friest, Thomas I., *An Analysis of Pre-Third Grade Language Instruction*. Master's thesis (project under way but not completed).

From the standpoint of curriculum instruction one of the significant problems is the determination of the exact degree of pupil mastery existing before the presentation of instruction upon a particular unit. This study, an analysis of pre-third grade language instruction, is a status study based upon the over-

lapping content of a number of the more commonly used textbooks and courses of study in language below the third grade. With such a picture at hand the teacher of third grade language will have a much better conception of the ability of her pupils to profit from third grade language instruction.

- f. *Hobbet, Mary, *The Relative Quality of Written Products in Language and Content Subjects*. Master's thesis (project under way but not completed).

The problem of the transfer of language skills to other instructional fields is one of vital interest to the teacher. The purpose of this particular investigation is to make a survey of a considerable number of paragraphs written by the same children in the fields of language, history, and geography for the purpose of discovering what the relative quality of these written productions may be. This investigation at the present time is limited to grades five and six. The criterion for the mechanics of written composition will be used as the basis of an analysis of punctuation and capitalization.

- g. *Hoyman, W. H., *An Analysis of Classroom Language Activities*. Master's thesis (project under way but not completed).

One of the major research problems in language is that of securing a true picture of language instruction as it is actually carried out in the classroom. The data in this case are to be secured from a selected group of elementary schools in the state of Iowa. This investigation being a status study will depend upon the co-operation of teachers in the classroom for its data. It is planned to secure reports of daily observations of language lessons taught in a large number of these schools. If the plan works out as scheduled there will be observation reports on 2880 daily lessons. The results of this investigation should furnish a clean-cut picture of the aims and purposes, as well as the procedures and materials used by the teacher in language instruction in grades three to six inclusive. This complete cross section should point out significant tendencies in language instruction as it is now going on in certain public school systems.

- h. Newkirk, Mary K., *A Case Study of the Oral Language Habits of a Selected Group of Young Children*. Master's thesis, 1930.

The purpose of this study was to make a careful analysis of the present language habits of a small selected group of children and to discover, if possible, the factors underlying these habits and their relation to the total

field of language.

- i. Prehm, Florence, *Editorial Practices as Criteria for the Course of Study on Capitalization and Punctuation*. Master's thesis, 1930.

This study was the initial attempt to determine current editorial practices in capitalization and in punctuation as reflected in the content of a selected group of editorial guides. The procedure involved in this study is discussed in detail in Section I-B of this report under the contribution entitled "A Criterion for the Course of Study in the Mechanics of Written Composition."

- j. Steger, L. A., *The Development of the Word Meaning Vocabulary of Certain Elementary School Pupils*. Master's thesis, 1932.

The central problem of this study was to secure objective information concerning the development of a knowledge of shades of word meaning on the part of pupils in grades five to eight inclusive.

- k. *Williams, Lucille, *Word Meanings at the First Grade Level*. Master's thesis (project now under way but not completed).

This problem involves the recognition of the development of word meanings at the first grade level as one of the significant aspects of language instruction in the primary grades. It is proposed to discover by this study the average number of different shades of meaning which it is possible to develop in a first grade group during a relatively brief period of instruction. Thirty words found common to the first thousand of the Horn Basic Writing Vocabulary and the first 500 of Thorndike's Teachers Word List will be used as the basis for this experiment.

6. Grade Placement Through Textbook Analysis

- a. Burnham, F. R., *Textbook Grade Placement of Fundamental Capitalization and Punctuation Skills*. Master's thesis, 1932.

This study was based upon an analysis of ten sets of language and grammar textbooks furnishing instruction in grades three to eight. Its main purpose was to summarize information concerning the present practices of the textbook authors in the grade placement of capitalization and punctuation items.

7. Grade Placement Through Analysis of Pupil Usage

- a. Cesander, P. K., *A Study of Pupil Usage as a Factor in Grade Placement of Certain Punctuation Items*. Doctor's dissertation, 1931.

This investigation was concerned chiefly with the problem of securing specific suggest-

tions for a more definite attack on grade placement of the language skills in the elementary grades. The basic approach to the problem lies in the assumption that knowledges and skills can be most effectively presented for instruction at the time the pupil himself is interested in using them. The study involved the analysis of 2466 compositions written by normal I. Q. pupils in grades four, six, and eight, in twenty different school systems. It involved a check of approximately 300,000 running words. A second feature of the study involved the analysis of the course of study and textbook content taught the pupils in the school systems from which the compositions were selected. The results of this investigation afford minimal lists of punctuation items for inclusion at the grade levels suggested.

- b. Cockerill, L. E., *A Study of Correct Usage of One Factor in the Grade Placement of Certain Punctuation Items in Grade Seven*. Master's thesis, 1931.

This study was designed to supplement Dr. Cesander's investigation. In general, his estimated list of punctuation items for the seventh grade was corroborated by this study.

- c. Hamilton, Francis M., *A Study of Correct Usage as One Factor in the Grade Placement of Certain Items of Punctuation in Grade Nine*. Master's thesis, 1932.

This investigation was based upon the same type of data and the same general procedures as were followed by the Cesander study, except that it carried the analysis into the ninth grade.

- d. Hamilton, Blanche N., *A Study of Correct Usage as One Factor in the Grade Placement of Certain Items of Punctuation in Grade Five*. Master's thesis, 1932.

This study corroborated Dr. Cesander's estimated list of punctuation items for grade five.

8. Grade Placement Through Studies of Persistence of Error

- a. Gettys, Joe L., *Study of the Persistency of Error of Certain Punctuation Items in Grades Four to Eight*. Master's thesis, 1932.

This investigation was designed to secure objective evidence on the persistence of errors on certain punctuation items in grades four to eight. The data were obtained through the use of a specially constructed set of exercises involving 31 selected punctuation items. These exercises were administered to 1310 pupils in five elementary school grades. The investiga-

tion offers only indirect evidence on the problem of grade placement of these selected items.

- b. Kennedy, Helen, *A Study of the Persistency of Error in Pupils' Reactions to Certain Verb Forms*. Master's thesis, 1931.

The purpose of this investigation was to determine the persistence of error in pupil reactions to certain common verb forms. The data were obtained from 684 pupils in grades five, six, seven, and eight. Specifically the study attempted to answer the following questions: (1) What is the persistence of error in the reactions of pupils to the principal parts of certain common verb forms throughout the grades five, six, seven, and eight? (2) What is the persistence of error in the reaction of pupils to certain verb forms often confused? (3) What is the persistence of error in the reaction of pupils to specific situations determining agreement of subject and verb.

D. *Supplementary List of Research Problems in the Language Curriculum*

The following suggested list of problems for investigation in the field of the curriculum of elementary English is submitted as a further indication of the direction which this specific research program is planned to take in the future. It is obvious that problems similar to these must be investigated before the language curriculum can be subjected to any significant revision. The limitations of space demand that only the topical statements of these problems be given without comment.

1. The Analysis of the Social Demands on Oral and Written Language.
2. The Relative Social Importance of Certain Types of Language Errors.
3. The Determination of Ultimate Goals in Language Usage.
4. The Analysis of the Free Oral Language of Adults.
5. The Standards of Usage of Recognized Writers.
6. The Analysis of Connectives Used in Children's Writings.
7. The Social Occurrence of Certain Modes and Tenses in Common Verb Forms.
8. The Grade Placement of Instruction on Certain Common Verb Forms.
9. The Learning Difficulty of Specific Language Skills.

10. The Relative Quality of the Oral and Written Products of the Same Individuals on Identical Topics.
11. The Analysis of Adjective and Adverbial Phrases and Clauses in Written and Oral Language of School Children.
12. The Analysis of Types of Sentence Structure at Various Grade and Usage Levels.
13. The Extent and Types of Incomplete Thoughts in Oral Language of Children and of Adults.
14. The Determination of Differences in Sentence Complexity and Organization in Oral and Written Language.
15. The Determination of the Extent and Complexity of Run-on Sentences in Oral Language.
16. The Determination of Types of Errors and Error Quotients for the Various Forms of Adjective Modifiers at all Usage Levels.
17. The Determination of the Types of Errors and the Error Quotients for the Various Forms of Adverbial Modifiers at all Usage Levels.
18. The Pronoun Errors and Error Quotients for Oral and Written Language of all Levels of Usage.
19. The Determination of Specific Language Difficulties Which Tend to Persist from Grade to Grade.
20. A Study of Possible and Actual Noun-Verb Combinations.
21. A Study of Possible and Actual Pronoun-Verb Combinations.
22. The Analysis of Prepositional Usages of Children and Adults.
23. The Analysis of Conjunctive Usages of Children and Adults.
24. The Use and Mis-use of the Hyphen in the Writings of Children.
25. The Rate and Limits of Growth of Meaning Vocabulary.
26. The Analysis of Vocabulary for Semantic Variations.
27. The Development of Variety in Word Choice.
28. The Influence of Contextual Relationships on Word Meanings.
29. A Comparative Appraisal of Illustrations in Language Textbooks.
30. The Types of Illustrations and Pictures which Teachers Find Useful in Language Books and Supplementary Material.
31. The Vocabulary Content of Language Textbooks.
32. The Overlap of Drill Content of Selected Language Tests and Drill Exercises.
33. Pupil Usage of Modifiers in Relation to the Textbook and the Course of Study.
34. The Grammatical Concepts Essential to the Teaching of Punctuation, Sentence Structure, etc.

(To be continued)



Editorial

Teaching Reading in the Upper Grades

TWO articles in this number of THE REVIEW, "Systematic versus Incidental Training in Reading," by Hugh S. Bonar (page 90), and "Remedial Treatment in Reading," by Marion Monroe (page 95) support each other with singular strength. Each discussion leads to the conclusion that reading should be taught intensively, particularly in the upper grades. One writer treats his topic extensively, drawing upon survey procedures and reasoning inductively from large masses of evidence; the other works intensively, proceeding largely by the case method with emphasis upon the laws of psychology. Background and foreground views are given, considering the two articles together, that are highly stimulating.

The course of study maker can develop persuasive arguments from the data presented by Dr. Bonar to aid him in gaining time allotment and teaching facilities for intensive reading courses in grades seven and eight, and above. One research report cited in Dr. Bonar's article shows that out of 42 state courses of study investigated in 1928, only 14 listed reading in the seventh and eighth grades as an objective, and out of 62 city courses examined, only 13 listed reading for these grades. Then comes the disclosure by Dr. Gray (1929) "that about one-third of the pupils in seventh grade classes rank below the sixth grade norm." Such evidence as this is strong reinforce-

ment for the course of study maker intent upon providing adequately for the intensive teaching of reading at the upper grade levels. And much constructive effort is needed in this direction.

But the problem, as one finds in "Remedial Treatment in Reading," is by no means solved by the mere introduction of courses of study in reading. A spur is given to more scientific teaching methods by the observation that "remedial reading becomes, in the clinic, a therapeutic technique in relieving not only the educational maladjustment, but freeing the child from many unhappy and undesirable attitudes which warp his developing personality." It is pointed out that although the modern teacher is sufficiently conscious of the importance of teaching methods, motivation, and guidance, the performance of these difficult skills is likely to fall short of the goal. And not only this, too often teachers are not sufficiently aware of the peculiar difficulties handicapping individual readers. "Remedial measures," declares the writer, "are often misdirected toward winning interest and increasing motivation in instances when specific help in the field of difficulty would be far more effective."

Such evidence of reading problems in the middle and upper grades as is presented in these two articles should result in provision for both preventive and remedial teaching in courses of study.

C. C. C.

Reviews and Abstracts

THE STUDY READERS. Alberta Walker, and Mary R. Parkman. Books four, five, and six. Book six illustrated by John Rae. New edition. Charles E. Merrill Company, 1933.

These readers have several claims to the attention of teachers practically concerned with the reading problem in the middle grades. In the first place, the readers are of the work type, essentially informational, but modified to meet the requirements of recreational reading. The authors have set goals in both of these fields. In the second place, the new series is not an experimentation, the authors declare, but a revision based upon nine years of practical use.

An examination of the contents of the three books discloses that these are not drawn primarily from literature or belles-lettres, but rather from factual writing. Nevertheless, the names of such authors as Hilda Conkling, Elinor Wylie, Walter de la Mare, John Masefield, Selma Lagerlöf, and Vachel Lindsay do appear. There is recognition of the fact that understanding is an element in reading for enjoyment, yet this is not made a problem as such, in these books. In this respect, the STUDY READERS have an advantage over readers of an entirely literary content which too often is submitted to dissection and analysis destructive of all aesthetic values.

The STUDY READERS have a content appropriate to their purposes. The range of interest is wide; boys and girls with normal tastes and predilections are evidently well known to the authors, and what they like has been well considered. Furthermore, materials used are modern and up to date.

Viewing in retrospect the large group of handicapped readers among secondary school pupils and college freshmen, one regrets that these students, in their elementary school years, did not have the advantages of such readers as these. For many of the skills sorely deficient in these handicapped boys and girls at the higher levels are given an emphasis that should insure mastery for users of the STUDY READERS. These skills are: (1) finding specific data, (2) evaluating facts and ideas received, (3) understanding and following directions. (4) mastering words, (5) understanding and organizing

materials, and (6) improving the rate of reading. There is, moreover, uniform provision for the development of these skills in characteristic situations, social and individual, that promises much for future reading achievement. This is but a way of saying that these readers possess activity programs admirably planned and consistently set up. Children using the books should gain the power in reading that comes only through the constant enrichment of experience and mastery of the major reading skills.

C. C. C.

POETRY IN THE NEW CURRICULUM. A Manual for Elementary Teachers. John Hooper. Stephen Daye Press, Brattleboro, Vt. 1932. \$1.20.

The subtitle, "A Manual for Elementary Teachers," describes this book accurately, for stimulating suggestions, sound common sense views, and workable lists of material make the volume one that a teacher will want to keep close at hand. The book is further distinguished by an absence of the didactic tone that characterizes so many handbooks, and by attractive format.

Poetry, the author believes, should be very much a part of the new curriculum both as a subject in itself, and for the enrichment of other subjects. "If the classroom is to be a place in which life is experienced, it must make a place for poetry, for poetry itself is one of the most vivid kinds of experience," he declares. Whereas in the past poetry was made to work its way in the schools, the new curriculum fosters an enjoyment of poetry from an appreciative, and from a creative standpoint. "Appreciative," as Mr. Hooper uses it, includes understanding, a receptive attitude toward literature, an ability to listen to poetry, to hear, to read, and to understand it.

"The purpose of an elementary course in poetry," says the author, "is not to make poets," but rather to lead "to an honest discrimination among words, a sense of values of words and their arrangement, and a realization that language is as alive as the moment in which it is used." The creative phase of enjoyment, therefore, embraces much more than the mere writing of jingles.

Deft and tactful guidance is needed to help children to appreciate poetry. The author distinguishes between the interests of little children and those of

pupils in the middle grades, and suggests methods and materials for both.

The volume is so sensible, so meaty, and so friendly in tone that it will find a permanent place

in a teacher's own professional collection. Moreover, it is as good a text for teacher-training classes as can be found on the subject.

D. B.

AMONG THE PUBLISHERS

Professional and Adult

American Library Association. Sub-committee on Library Work With Children. Mary S. Wilkinson, Chairman. *THE RIGHT BOOK FOR THE RIGHT CHILD. A Graded Buying List of Children's Books.* John Day, 1933.

Lathrop, Edith A. *AIDS IN BOOK SELECTION FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIBRARIES.* U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education. Circular No. 69. Jan. 1, 1933 (Mimeographed).

Rich, Frank M. and others. *THE LIBRARY READERS.* 4, Bookland Stories; 5, Bookville Fair; 6, Bookland Journeys. Illustrated. Lyons and Carnahan, 1931-1932.

Russell, Dora. *CHILDREN. WHY DO WE HAVE THEM?* Harper, 1933. \$2.50.

Books for Children.

Bennett, C. M. *RED PETE THE RUTHLESS.* Dutton, 1933. \$1.75

Berry, Erick. *CAREERS OF CYNTHIA.* Illustrated by Ruth King. Harcourt, Brace, 1932. \$2.00

Best, Herbert. *GARRAM THE CHIEF. The Story of the Hill Tribes.* Illustrated by Erick Berry. Doubleday, Doran, 1932. \$2.00

Bianco, Pamela. *THE STARLIT JOURNEY.* Illustrated by the author. Macmillan, 1933. \$1.25

Björnson, Björnstjerne. *SUNNY HILL, A Norwegian Idyll.* Translated from "Synnove Solbakken." Introduction by Annie S. Cutter. Illustrated by Johan Bull. Macmillan, 1932. \$1.75

Burglon, Nora. *CHILDREN OF THE SOIL. A Story of Scandinavia.* Illustrated by E. Parin d'Aulaire. Doubleday, Doran, 1932. \$2.00

Cades, Helen Rawson. *GOOD LOOKS FOR GIRLS.* Harcourt, Brace, 1932. \$2.00

Disraeli, Robert. *SEEING THE UNSEEN.* Illustrated by photo-micrographs by the author. John Day, 1933. \$2.00

Forbes, Katherine Russell. *DILLY, a China Cat.* Illustrated by F. J. Bridgman. Lothrop, Lee, and Shepard. 1931. \$1.50

Gag, Wanda. *WANDA GAG'S STORY BOOK.*

Illustrated by the author. Coward-McCann. 1928-1932.

Gay, Jan. *THE MUTT BOOK.* Illustrated by Zhenya Gay. Harper, 1932. \$2.50

Hamilton, Edwin T. *THE BOY BUILDER.* Plans by the author. Illustrated by G. Ruth Taylor. Harcourt, Brace, 1932. \$2.50

Hawthorne, Hildegard. *THE ROMANTIC REBEL. The Story of Nathaniel Hawthorne.* Illustrated by W. M. Berger. Century, 1932.

Holzworth, John M. *THE TWIN GRIZZLIES OF ADMIRALTY ISLAND.* Illustrated. Lippincott, 1932. \$2.00

Hughes, Avah W. *CARRYING THE MAIL. A Second Grade's Experiences.* Bureau of Publications. Teachers College, Columbia University. 1933

James, Will. *UNCLE BILL. A Tale of Two Kids and a Cowboy.* Illustrated by the author. Scribners, 1932. \$2.00

Levinger, Elma Ehrlich. *BENJAMIN'S BOOK About his Family.* Illustrated by Kurt Wiese. Doubleday, Doran, 1933. \$2.00

Linderman, Frank, B. *STUMPY.* Illustrated by H. M. Stoops. John Day, 1933. \$2.00

Moeschlin, Elsa. *THE LITTLE BOY WITH THE BIG APPLES.* Pictures with text. Coward-McCann, 1932.

Page, Thomas Nelson. *TWO LITTLE CONFEDERATES.* Illustrations by John W. Thomason, Jr. Scribner, 1932. \$2.50

Robinson, Lincoln Fay. *TWO BOYS.* Illustrated by the author. Doubleday, Doran, 1932. \$1.50

Scott, Pauline. *THE PINK PORCELAIN PIPE.* Dorrance, 1932. \$1.50

Struther, Jan. *SYCAMORE SQUARE and Other Verses.* Illustrated by Ernest H. Shepard. Oxford University Press, 1932. \$1.25

Triggs, Lovell Beall. *ROSALITA.* Illustrated by Weda Yap. Century, 1932. \$2.00

White, William C. *MADE IN RUSSIA.* Illustrated by George R. Wirén. Alfred A. Knopf, 1932. \$2.00

(Continued from page 85)

words with little or no meaning for himself and yet produce great effect upon one who, with a rich background of experience, reads them.

As a further illustration, let us say that one reads the statement: Columbus discovered America in 1492. This is a statement of fact, but what can one create from the symbols? A child with a memory span of, say, five years can scarcely form an adequate time concept of the 441 years between then and now. One with eighty years of clear memory can think of such, as but little more than the memory span of five such as he. The old person can build time meaning of considerable magnitude; the child cannot. Similarly the word "discovered" can mean but little to a child, much to the average adult, and most to an explorer. Thus we see that a statement of fact, however, simple, is but a group of related symbols. The content of the statement is furnished by each mind which comes into contact with it. Words

are but empty forms; the content of the fact is as varied as the minds of those who read it or hear it.

It may be objected that the matter of definition of reading is not highly important; it is what we mean, rather than what we say, which counts. There is, of course, some truth in the contention. But, on the other hand, it usually takes no more words to define a concept that helps the reader to generate an internally consistent fabric in his thinking. To speak in terms which are not consistent with that which one would defend if he were pressed to define his concepts is to lead the reader into a state of confusion from which he can free himself only with considerable labor. Furthermore, there are many who will not take the trouble to think through to the psychological and philosophical implications of concepts which are being developed. This, in the case of the process of reading, may lead to serious errors both in reading and the teaching of others to read.



THE ROLE OF THE CONCEPT IN READING ABILITY

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of connections between verbal symbols and their meanings as one of the three factors required to explain errors in reading comprehension.

In retrospect, the study has demonstrated a definite relationship between the ability to read and understand the printed

page and those aspects of the concept which we have referred to as organization, clarity, and accuracy. On the other hand, it has not been shown that generic variations or differences in the richness of concepts are of any particular importance as co-variants of reading ability.



THE WAYSIDE, HOME OF THREE AUTHORS

(Continued from page 100)

tive treatment of the old myths, told to the audience of Periwinkle, Squash Blossom, Sweet Fern and the others. One can still walk on the Mount of Vision, still look down on the old house, with its

high-perched tower and gables. Perhaps we are only blind and deaf that we do not see the audience clearly, nor recognize aright the softly calling wind in the pines.

(Continued from page 94)

Conclusions

The materials reviewed, including both reports of special experiments and opinions based upon general observation and study, warrant the following conclusions:

- 1—There is a distinct place for reading in the program of studies.
- 2—Necessary general reading abilities cannot be adequately developed entirely through the content subjects.
- 3—The reading time allotment can be greatly reduced in many school systems if reading skills appropriate to content subjects are given supplemental development in those subjects.
- 4—Content subject teachers beyond the sixth grade can conceivably and

properly present the reading vocabulary, signs, maps, et cetera, peculiar to their subjects.

- 5—General reading weaknesses beyond the sixth grade should be given remedial attention by a reading specialist.
- 6—At present the general reading accomplishment at the close of the sixth grade has not adequately prepared many pupils successfully to read secondary school subjects.
- 7—Content subject teachers should submit lists of special reading abilities desired in their fields, to teachers in intermediate grades. Some of these can be started before pupils reach the seventh grade.

REMEDIAL TREATMENT IN READING

(Continued from page 97)

the learning problems which seem, on analysis, to result primarily from certain constitutional deviations. The awareness of these frequent difficulties may, however, lead the teacher to analyze more carefully the needs of individuals who are not profiting by the standard procedures which work successfully with the group. After a careful analysis has been made of the child's difficulty and appropriate methods determined, it is not hard to obtain a marked improvement in reading in a comparatively short time. Clinical records show severely retarded cases that have been brought up to grade readily in the course

of a few months of systematic and persistent remedial work. The observation of changes both in school work and in personality which are often coincident with the removal of the child's reading disability adds significance to this particular field of child guidance. Far more is accomplished for the child than simply facilitating his school work and raising his school marks. Remedial instruction in reading is frequently the means of opening up to him the world of books, magazines, newspapers, and above all, of restoring his confidence in his own ability to succeed.

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